At 2.6 Million Miles, Irv Gordon and his Historic Volvo Roll On

Retired Long Island Science Teacher Sets Sights on 3 Million Miles In His Record-Breaking 1966 Volvo P1800

IRVINE, Calif. (Oct. 26, 2007) -- With 2.6 million miles on his record-breaking, shiny red 1966 Volvo P1800, 67-year-old Irv Gordon is now aiming to achieve a near impossible milestone - driving three million miles in the same car.

Gordon, a retired science teacher from East Patchogue, N.Y., purchased his sporty Volvo in June 1966, and immediately fell in love, driving 1,500 miles in the first 48 hours. With a 125-mile round-trip daily commute, a dedication to vehicle maintenance and a passion for driving, Gordon logged 500,000 miles in 10 years. In 1998 with 1.69 million miles, he made the Guinness Book of World Records for most miles driven by a single owner in a non-commercial vehicle.

Today, Gordon breaks his own record every time he drives, whether it's to Cincinnati for coffee, Rolla, Mo., for lunch or Green River, Wyo., for dinner. And now, the treasured Volvo P1800 continues to roll through the ages despite the wear of road and time, Gordon - like any mighty record-holder at the top of his game - has begun to think about his legacy.

"My goal is to reach three million miles in the next five years," Gordon said. "But, whether I reach that mark is more up to me than it is the car. The car's parts may be able to take it, but I'm not so sure about my own.

"I turn 72 on July 15, 2012," he added. "That seems like a nice day to clock three million and park the car once and for all. It will be a fantastic testament to the engineering genius of Volvo as well as to the resiliency of folks my age.

"I'll also feel comfortable that three million miles is a record that no one will ever be able to reach in the same car," Gordon continued. "That is, unless Barry Bonds decides to start driving his car more after he retires from baseball."

Slowing the Pace in Recent Years

Through the late '90s and early part of this decade, Gordon had been driving at a near fanatical pace of well over 100,000 miles per year, peaking in March 2002 when he gained worldwide attention for turning two million miles while driving down Broadway in Times Square. Today, to reach his next milestone, he is allowing a more conservative pace of 80,000 miles per year, thanks in large part to doctor's orders.

"You tire a little easier when you reach my age," Gordon said. "Gone are the nights when I'd be driving through Nebraska at 3 a.m. on I-80 West, jacked up on two pots of delicious Waffle House coffee.

"Last year, when my doctor told me I could no longer drive 24 hours at a time, 1,000 miles a day, I thought he was out of his mind, but I now realize he's right," Gordon said. "Today, I get a full night's sleep, eat healthy and take eight days to drive cross country, rather than six. The car gets plenty of exercise no matter how I plan each trip."

Gordon Seeking New Places to Drive

Gordon drives for the pure pleasure of driving but, these days, what motivates him most is an invitation to drive to an event to show off his car and visit friends. As he drives toward three million miles, he's looking for new places to go.

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"I've traveled pretty much every Interstate in the U.S. many times over, so these days I'm looking for fresh, alternative routes and sights," Gordon said. "I'm hoping for some invitations to some faraway places like Europe, Australia or Hawaii.

"I can hold my own with almost any trucker at any truck stop in any country - discussing roads, construction, or the best nearby, small-town diner with a good cup of decaf and piece of raisin toast."

What to Do After 3 Million
Gordon is unsure what to do with his Volvo after three million miles, though he has considered selling it for no less than one dollar per each mile he's driven.

"I also think it should go in a nice, cozy museum where people will get to enjoy seeing the car that beat the odds - all with the same engine, same radio, same axles, same transmission and of course the same driver," Gordon said.

"So, maybe I'll sell it. Maybe I'll donate it to a museum," he concluded. "Who knows? Maybe I'll keep driving it."

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Media: Photographs of Gordon are available for download at http://www.volvocars-pr.com/; search "Irv Gordon"